

8/12/81
Drafted: ARA/SC:KMCCool
ARGENTINA PROJECT (S700000044) --
U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS
Margaret P. Grafeld, Director
() Release ☒ Excise () Deny
Exemption(s): 86
Declassify: () In Part () In Full
() Classify as () Extend as () Downgrade to
Date Declassify on Reason

Clearances:
ARA/SC: Fairbanks
HA: RJorgenson (phone)
ARA: Muddell
H: JMcBride

14: ~~Williamis~~ *Williamis*

E A I M

August 12, 1981

Dear Senator Armstrong:

Thank you for your inquiry of 27 July 1981 on behalf of concerning the detention in Argentina of Rodolfo Begnardi and Deborah Benshoam. B6

The Department of State has been aware of these two cases for some time. According to the latest information from our Embassy in Buenos Aires, both Ms. Benshoam and Mr. Begnardi continue to be detained in Argentina under the authority of the National Executive. Mr. Begnardi's certificate of eligibility for right of option is still pending before Argentine authorities. Our records show that Ms. Benshoam had the right of option denied on June 1980. The Argentine Government is aware that Mr. Begnardi's family is in this country and of the high level of attention that both these cases have received here.

Your interest in Mr. Begnardi's and Ms. Benshoam's cases is greatly appreciated, and we will continue to keep you informed of any significant developments.

Regarding the appointment of an Assistant Secretary for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, the Department has been actively considering this question since the withdrawal of our original nominee, as part of our general inquiry into how we can best organize ourselves to effectively accomplish the goals of the Human Rights Bureau. We have not yet reached a decision on the Assistant Secretary post nor on the broader organizational questions, but we are not contemplating the disestablishment of that office. We hope to resolve this issue in the near future.

Yours sincerely,

RF
Richard Fairbanks
Assistant Secretary
for Congressional Relations

Enclosure:
Correspondence returned.

The Honorable
William L. Armstrong,
United States Senate.